Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 212455
ORIGIN ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-05 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /066 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/ECA:JNBUMPUS:JC
APPROVED BY ARA:TATODMAN
ARA/ECA:RWZIMMERMANN
D/HA:PDERIAN
----------113407 061403Z /47
R 061310Z SEP 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 212455

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, AR

SUBJECT: TODMAN/DERIAN MEET WITH AJC LEADERS

1. ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN AND HUMAN RIGHTS COORDINATOR DERIAN MET SEPTEMBER 1 WITH FIVE LEADERS OF AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE (AJC) TO DISCUSS RECENT ARGENTINE VISIT OF DAVID GELLER, AJC REPRESENTATIVE FOR LATIN AMERICA.

2. GELLER SAID IMPRESSION GROWING AMONG JEWS HERE AND IN ARGENTINA THAT THE U.S. BACKING OFF ITS STRONG HUMAN RIGHTS STANCE. HE CITED RECENT STATEMENTS BY CODELS AS EXAMPLE OF SOFTER LINE. HE SAID NOW WAS THE TIME TO MOVE, NOT TAKE A LESS ACTIVE APPROACH. SPEAKING FOR JEWISH COMMUNITY HE SUGGESTED U.S. KEEP THE PRESSURE ON. TO REMAIN SILENT WAS TO ACQUIESE. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HARD TO KNOW HOW MUCH PRESSURE TO EXERT. ARGENTINE JEWS DID NOT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 212455

WANT U.S. TO PUSH SO HARD THAT VIDELA WOULD FALL. WORSE GOVERNMENT WOULD SUCCEED. ON OTHER HAND, VIDELA MIGHT BE ABLE USE U.S. PRESSURE TO MANUEVER MILITARY HARD-LINERS INTO GREATER ACCEPTANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

3. AJC LEADERS HAD NO SPECIFIC PROPOSALS FOR PRESSURING VIDELA, BUT WANTED DEPARTMENT TO KNOW THAT THEY WERE

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CONCERNED OVER GENERAL HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN ARGENTINA AND ESPECIALLY OVER ARGENTINE ANTI-SEMITISM. THEY CONSIDERED THAT OVERALL HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION WAS DETERIORATING IN ARGENTINA.

4. AJC LEADERS SPOKE OF OFFERS OF SUPPORT FROM OTHER CIVIL RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS TO DENOUNCE ARGENTINE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. AT MOMENT, HOWEVER, AJC NOT INCLINED TO JOIN FORCES TO FORM BROAD FRONT AGAINST ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT FOR FEAR OF REPRISALS AGAINST JEWS IN BUENOS AIRES.

5. AJC LEADERS AGREED TIMERMAN CASE WAS KEY TO HOW ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT WOULD MOVE. IF HE RELEASED LITTLE LIKELIHOOD OF REAL ANTI-SEMITIC OUTBREAK, BUT IF HE IS CONVICTED, OR WORSE, KILLED, MIGHT BE INDICATION THAT GOA WISHED TO INTIMIDATE THE JEWS.

6. THE AJC LEADERS PROMISED TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH DEPARTMENT ON ARGENTINE SITUATION AND TO CONSIDER WHAT PRESSURES, IF ANY, COULD BE SUCCESSFULLY APPLIED ON GOA TO GET IT TO REINSTATE RULE OF LAW. VANCE

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